

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 050022Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7069

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 2960

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS FROM JOVA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MX

SUBJECT: MARCH 14 INCIDENT AT UNIVERSITY, SUBSEQUENT  
DEVELOPMENTS, CONTRIBUTE TO ATMOSPHERE OF SUSPICION

REF: MEXICO 2931

1. I WANT TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO REFTEL CONCERNING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS GROWING OUT OF PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S UNHAPPY EXPERIENCE AT THE NATIONAL AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY (UNAM) ON MARCH 14 WHICH HAVE SOME BEARING ON THE STATE OF USG-GOM RELATIONS. THE FOLLOWING PROVIDES PERSPECTIVE ON THESE DEVELOPMENTS.

2. FROM TIME TO TIME OVER THE PAST SIX OR EIGHT MONTHS ECHEVERRIA HAS HINTED PUBLICLY THAT "FOREIGN" ELEMENTS WERE BEHIND SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY IN MEXICO. IN HIS ANNUAL STATE OF THE NATION REPORT LAST SEPTEMBER, FOR EXAMPLE, HE ALLUDED TO THIS POSSIBILITY; (AT THE TIME, HE WAS REFERRING SPECIFICALLY TO THE KIDNAPPING OF HIS FATHER-IN-LAW). GIVEN THE LEAD, MANY OTHERS IN MEXICAN ESTABLISHMENT HAVE CRITICIZED "OBSCURE FORCES" AS RESPONSIBLE FOR MEXICO'S ILLS (EVEN I WAS ACCUSED OF ARRANGING KIDNAPPING OF ECHEVERRIA'S FATHER-IN-LAW) -- TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT "OBSCURE FORCES," NEVER IDENTIFIED BY GOM AND NEVER CAUGHT, HAVE BECOME A SUBJECT OF IRONIC JOKES. WE HAVE SEEN INDICATIONS, AS ANOTHER

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EXAMPLE , THAT ECHEVERRIA IS INTENSELY SUSPICIOUS OF SO-CALLED

"MONTERREY GROUP," I.E. CONSERVATIVE BUSINESS SECTOR OF MONTERREY WHICH HE BELIEVES TO BE ANTAGONISTIC TOWARD HIM AND FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD U.S. WE HAVE HEARD OF ECHEVERRIA'S PUBLIC RELATIONS CZAR BRINGING CRUDE PRESSURE TO BEAR UPON NEWSPAPERS, TELLING HERALDO FOR EXAMPLE TO GIVE LESS FAVORABLE EDITORIAL TREATMENT TO THE U.S. AND TO QUIT CRITICIZING GOM.

3. WE KNOW THAT ECHEVERRIA IS WORRIED OVER THE PHILIP AGEE BOOK WHICH MENTIONS HIM AND LINKS HIM WITH THE OPERATIONS OF USG SECURITY AGENCIES. A "HIGH-RANKING" GOM OFFICIAL RECENTLY TOLD LA TIMES REPORTER THAT HE BELIEVED AGEE IS STILL ON CIA PAYROLL AND SUSPECTED USG OF SPONSORING AGEE BOOK TO "EMBARRASS" ECHEVERRIA AND OTHER LA LEADERS.

4. ECHEVERRIA'S VIEWS ON THE FALL OF THE ALLENDE REGIME AND ON ALLEGED USG INVOLVEMENT WERE MADE ALL TOO CLEAR IN HIS PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THE SO-CALLED CHILEAN "WAR CRIMES COMMISSION" WHICH RECENTLY MET HERE. MRS HORTENSIA ALLENDE, WHO LIVES HERE WHEN NOT TRAVELING, APPARENTLY HAS EASY ACCESS TO MRS ECHEVERRIA, AS DO OTHER CHILEAN EXILES AND IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT THE CHILEANS WARN ECHEVERRIA AGAINST USG INTRUSION IN MEXICAN AFFAIRS.

5. IN RECENT WEEKS, WE HAVE LEARNED THAT AT ECHEVERRIA'S EXPRESS INSTRUCTIONS, MEXICAN SECURITY OFFICERS HAVE PLACED PRINCIPAL EMBASSY OFFICERS UNDER SURVEILLANCE AND ARE OTHERWISE ATTEMPTING TO MONITOR USG ACTIVITIES IN MEXICO. (I INFORMED SHLAUDEMAN AND ARA/MEX OF THIS FACT BY LETTER SOME TIME AGO.) WE KNOW THAT THE GOM HAS OPPOSED EVEN MODEST INCREASE IN DEA PERSONNEL HERE BECAUSE OF SENSITIVITY OVER USG OPERATIONS IN MEXICO AND RECENT REVELATIONS, LEAKS, AND CHARGES MADE AGAINST THE CIA IN U.S. MEDIA.

6. THE DEVELOPMENTS REPORTED IN REFTEL MUST BE SEEN IN THE LIGHT OF THE FOREGOING. CLEARLY, THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS SERVICE (IPS) HAS NO CONNECTION WITH USG NOR IS USG RESPONSIBLE FOR ALLEGED ASSOCIATIONS OR ACTIVITIES OF A FORMER LOCAL EMPLOYEE. HOWEVER, THE WAY IN WHICH MEXICO OBSERVERS, INCLUDING OFFICIALS, MIGHT VIEW UNRELATED FACTORS OR POSSIBLE LINKAGE BETWEEN USG AND CONFIDENTIAL

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THOSE WHO ATTACKED PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA AT THE UNIVERSITY IS LIKELY TO CONTAIN LARGE ELEMENTS OF SUSPICION, IMAGINATION, AND PERHAPS VAST OVERESTIMATION OF EXTENT OF USG OPERATIONS IN MEXICO. SUCH OBSERVERS MAY, FOR EXAMPLE, NOTE WILD CHARGES MADE BY DANIEL SNEIDER AND GIVE THEM UNDUE WEIGHT BECAUSE HE IS SON OF U.S. AMBASSADOR. THEY ARE LIKELY TO BE HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF COLLADO UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES SIMPLY BECAUSE OF HIS LONG EMPLOYMENT BY

USG AS WELL AS PREVIOUS GOM RECORD NOTED IN PARA 5 REFTTEL. WE CONTINUE TO DOUBT THAT ECHEVERRIA AND HIS PRINCIPAL ADVISERS REALLY BELIEVE THAT USG AGENCIES WERE INVOLVED IN MARCH 14 INCIDENT AT UNIVERSITY, BUT WE CANNOT RULE OUT SOME LINGERING DOUBT IN ECHEVERRIA'S MIND AND A POTENTIALLY LARGER DOUBT IN MEXICAN PUBLIC OPINION.

7. I BELIEVE YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF THIS SOMEWHAT MURKY SITUATION BASED ON SUSPICION AND EVEN CONTAINING, PERHAPS, SOME ELEMENTS OF "PARANOIA" SUPERHEATED IMAGINATION, AND HYSTERIA. SOME OF THOSE AROUND ECHEVERRIA, PARTICULARLY HIS WIFE, MAY HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT WE ARE TRYING TO "DESTABILIZE" MEXICO. OTHERS WHO KNOW BETTER MAY NONETHELESS FIND IT USEFUL TO EXPLOIT DEVELOPMENTS DESCRIBED ABOVE, (A) TO CURRY FAVOR WITH ECHEVERRIA BY ECHOING HIS ALLEGATIONS, OR (B) TO SCORE POINTS FOR OR AGAINST ONE OR ANOTHER PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. IN ANY EVENT, IF ABOVE DEVELOPMENTS WERE TO BE LINKED IN COLD PRINT THEY COULD PROVE DAMAGING TO USG AND WE HAD BETTER BE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THEM.  
JOVA

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** INTERVENTION, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, ALLEGATIONS  
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**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** 75 MEXICO 2931  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 10 SEP 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <10 SEP 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <11 SEP 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** MARCH 14 INCIDENT AT UNIVERSITY, SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS, CONTRIBUTE TO ATMOSPHERE OF SUSPICION  
**TAGS:** PINT, PFOR, PINS, MX, US, (ECHEVERRIA ALVAREZ, LUIS)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006